

2025

H32

PP1945t

"Go deep enough there is music everywhere."—*Carlyle.*

The Minim,

A MUSICAL MAGAZINE FOR EVERYBODY.

(ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.)

(ENTERED AT STATIONERS' HALL.)

Vol. III, No. 30.

MARCH, 1896.

Price, One Penny
By Post, 1d. 1*l*



MISS ESTHER PALLISER.

MISS ESTHER PALLISER.

Unfortunately we cannot claim this charming young singer as a compatriot, as she was born in Philadelphia, U.S.A., July 28th, 1871.

She showed from her earliest years decided proofs of great musical talent, and under the guidance of her father began a systematic course of training, which laid the foundations of the sound and varied musical knowledge Miss Palliser admittedly possesses. At later periods she was the pupil of Mmes. Viardot and Marchesi.

From the first Miss Palliser's career has been singularly successful, and this, perhaps, arises from the fact that it is not in one branch only of her profession that she excels, but appears equally

at home in oratorio, opera, or on the concert platform. Her greatest triumphs were, perhaps, in Sir A. Sullivan's "Ivanhoe," in which work she created the part of Rowena, and in Messager's "La Basoche."

Since then she has shown her versatility by her successful appearances in Wagner's operas at Covent Garden, where her undoubted dramatic powers proved that it is not only by the charm of her voice that she can touch the hearts of her audience. In fact, we may safely predict a glorious future for this clever young artiste, and in conclusion can only wish her a continuance of the brilliant triumphs she has hitherto enjoyed.

A MEDIATOR.

BY WILFRED EDMOND.

I can't tell you how I made his acquaintance, for I forgot. (I don't think it matters much—but I think it just as well to mention it, or else somebody will want to know; and as this is a true story, i.e., about as true as most other true stories, I don't want any doubt thrown upon its credibility.)

But somehow or another I did strike up a kind of acquaintanceship with the old man; at any rate we had some subjects in common. We were both organists, both loved old English anthems and services, and both of us loved the river. He was a far better fisherman than I was, though, perhaps, not a better organist. He knew so much about the old city churches and organists—what their salaries were, how many children they had (I believe he could have told you where they bought their bootlaces if you had asked him) that he was really a very entertaining and amusing companion.

He used to tell me all sorts of tales about the queer occurrences in the city churches, and particularly was he fond of expatiating on the respective merits of the various city organists.

"Ah! sir," he would say, "there has never been a man to play 'Andel like George Cooper; these young fellows plays lots of stuff difficult enough, I daresay, but with no more music in it than there is oysters in a blackberry bush. Give me 'Andel and George Cooper, I say, for music and playing! Once I heard a certain man try to play 'Fixed in His Everlasting Seat' (you know it sir, don't you?), and when he come to where the thunder roars, what do you think he did?" "Missed it out," I said. "No, worse. He clapped both his feet on to a few pedals anyhow, and Lor', how the thunder *did* roar! but he didn't play the notes at all, it was all covered up with the infernal

din! So I waited till he had finished, and then I followed him. I says to my friend that was with me, right loud so that he could hear, 'there goes the man wot murdered 'Andel! he should hear George Cooper play it!' I guess he didn't enjoy his supper beff that night, eh!"

"You are a severe critic," I said, "I should like to hear you play yourself!" (This conversation, I should say, took place at an early period of our acquaintanceship.)

This sentiment seemed to have as depressing an effect upon the old man as similar expressions have upon critics of the professional order; but I was really interested, and I determined to follow the matter up.

"Where do you play?" I enquired. "I don't hardly like to tell you, sir," was the reply. However, at last I elicited the fact that he was the organist at the workhouse infirmary in my neighbourhood, at the munificent salary of £15 a year.

"I shall come and hear you one evening," I said; "I know the —." "For 'eaven's sake, don't," the old man cried—"the orgin's bust up last Sunday and we only have the 'armonium; a good many of the notes won't play, and them that do are out of tune."

However, I did go, and I found the performance sufficiently amusing, though it had its sad side, too. It was a very large infirmary, and the sight of so many poor broken-down specimens of humanity was very touching—men on one side, women on the other. Some were really fine-looking persons, or would have been had they been clad otherwise than in the hideous workhouse garb. I surveyed the scene with much interest, and as I scanned the various faces I amused myself by conjecturing



as to how they came by their various misfortunes. All at once I saw a face that gave me an awful shock—a face I had known many years before under very different circumstances. The same handsome face and commanding figure was still there, but the soul had evidently fled; no intelligence lit up the eyes and no interest in surroundings betokened the living brain. The last time I saw the man he was a well-to-do inhabitant of —shire, full of life and vigour. I heard afterwards that he had gone to America, and he passed completely out of my mind until I recognised him in the workhouse infirmary chapel. Yet there could be no mistake; the man who had once beheld James Shirburn could not possibly mistake him.

My friend, the chaplain, supplied me with the information as to how he came there; he was found wandering, a hopeless lunatic, near London Bridge nearly twelve years ago, and he had been confined in the institution ever since.

"What is his name?" I asked.

"Oh! we don't know his name," the chaplain replied—"he had no possessions but the few rags he stood up in; his name he said he had forgotten, and also where he came from. He is perfectly harmless and quiet in his manners, quite obedient and capable of understanding what is said; but he never speaks unless spoken to, and his mind seems a perfect blank as to what his life has been. The doctor says he must have had some great shock."

"I am sure it is James Shirburn," I said. "Can I speak to him?"

"Yes," said the chaplain, "but you must get permission from the doctor, which we can easily do."

The necessary permission obtained, we found the object of my interest sunning himself on a seat on one of the asphalted walks.

"How are you, James?" said I.

"James—James"—murmured the old man, "who called me James?"

"I did," I replied, "Don't you remember Archie Douglas, who used to come and ride Brown Bess?"

"No—no—it is no use. I can remember nothing. Yet the name seems familiar."

"Don't you remember the old house, Mr. Shirburn?"

Again a start, and a gleam of intelligence from those passionless absent-minded eyes.

"I am sure," said I to the doctor, "that it is he. Can't he possibly be cured? He used to be such a bright and clever fellow."

"Well," said the doctor, "if we could procure him change of scene he might improve, but I fear slowly. If he could be transplanted back to the scenes of his happy early life it might do him good; in fact, sometimes, even a cure has resulted."

"I will gladly undertake to do this," said I. I

was wanting a little change myself, and as I knew some people in the neighbourhood of Shirburn's old home, I thought I should not have such a bad time, even if Shirburn was no better. It was arranged that a young *medico* named Jones, who had just qualified, should accompany us down to —ton, where for the present we could stay at the village inn, going down from Paddington Station the following day.

On my way home I told the old organist, who waited for me outside the gates, of my little plan. He was much interested, for poor Shirburn was about the only sympathetic listener he ever had.

"One day I was playing 'Andel's 'Angels ever bright and fair' (you know that, sir, don't you?) and No. 27 he come to me with tears streaming down his face, and says, 'Oh! Mr. Greenwood, your music seems to take me back into another existence, it do!' And when I played 'Andel's 'Amen' from the 'Messiah' (fancy playing that with seven pedals broke!) he was fairly carried away. Oh! yes, I am sure he must come of a good family, he have such a taste for my playing! You must tell me, sir, how he gets on."

"Yes, Mr. Greenwood, I will," I said.

Having now arrived at the point where our roads diverged we shook hands and parted.

The next day saw the three of us comfortably located at the "Three Crows" at —ton. It was a good, old-fashioned hostelry, with a large, shady garden, very pleasant in the summer heat.

Shirburn stared about him in a loose, vacuous way, as usual, with no special interest in anything in particular.

The morning after we decided to take Shirburn to his old home, and try the effect on him. As we approached the picturesque old Tudor house I watched narrowly for the least change in his unexpressionless and immobile face, but there was not the slightest sign of intelligence. I knocked at the door, and enquired of the then tenants if they could let us have two bedrooms and a sittingroom. We arranged matters, and it was decided that we should take up our residence there next day, which we did.

Shirburn seemed as impassive as ever; he did not recognise his surroundings, nor was he recognised by the old inhabitants any more than I was. One day I enquired from our landlord if he had ever heard the name of Shirburn.

"Shirburn! why of course I have! He used to live in this very house till he went to Peru."

"Peru!" said I, "how did he come to go to Peru?"

"Well, sir, I don't rightly know, but I have heard that he came into some property there; anyway, he got married to old Farmer Everton's daughter, and he went away and has never been heard of since."

It flashed upon me then and there that I had some time since seen some advertisements for "James Shirburn or his rightful heir" issued by a firm of solicitors in Lincoln's Inn, but the matter had quite passed out of my mind until I was thus reminded. I was so convinced that there was something in it that I would run up to town, and make some enquiries, if I could not learn anything more, or do any good by remaining.

"But what use would it be to make a man in the condition of Shirburn rich?" was a thought that instantly occurred. He could not enjoy wealth himself, and whom would it benefit if he were possessed of thousands? Yet a man of this kind must possess friends and relations—and, besides, was married to Miss Everton. Where were they, and why did they not come forward to claim the property? Perhaps they had, indeed, and were now living in luxury, whilst the rightful owner was in a workhouse infirmary.

Obviously it was useless to expect any help from Shirburn himself, and without it how could his identity be established, or his property wrested from the present holders.

These and other similar problems were exercising my brain as we were passing the village church. I heard the organ going, and as I am always interested in seeing new instruments I stepped in to examine the merits of the "kist of whistles" (as the Scotch call it), which had supplanted the little village orchestra of my day.

It was a very decent little instrument of two manuals, well built, and capitally voiced with full pedal compass, and altogether very playable. As I did not want to disturb the organist's practice I asked if I might come in again later and bring a friend, handing in my card at the same time. My reputation in the musical world was sufficiently great to ensure a cordial welcome, with speedy permission to use the organ as much as I desired while I was in the neighbourhood.

I sauntered to the inn for lunch, and after it was over all three of us visited the church, more because we had nothing very definite to do than for any other reason. With the first notes of the organ Shirburn again became strangely excited, much as he had done in the workhouse infirmary chapel. As I continued to play the perspiration gathered in thick beads on his forehead, his features twitched, and his limbs shook, and his general aspect was quite alarming, at least, so Jones told me afterwards. I could not see him, or I am sure I could not have persisted in doing what apparently caused him so

much agony. At last, while I was playing "Angels ever bright and fair," affairs came to a climax; he shrieked, and fell unconscious. Jones and I carried him into the open air, and, chartering — ton's only public vehicle, at last safely landed him at the "Three Crows," still, however, unconscious and, to all appearance, dead.

"Everything now depends," said Jones, "on how he wakes up. He will be either all right, or he will be worse than ever."

To make a long story short, Shirburn *did* recover, and was able to give an account of himself. It seems that he and his wife were returning from Peru when the steamer foundered, and Shirburn and his wife were amongst the few who for a time were able to sustain themselves in a boat. Poor Mrs. Shirburn died from thirst and exposure, and Shirburn himself, when picked up the sole survivor, was little less than a lunatic. He made his escape before he could be handed over to any authorities, and all traces of his identity being destroyed he drifted into the workhouse infirmary even while the Chancery authorities were advertising for him or his heirs.

Of course we returned to town at once, and no time was lost in communicating with the authorities, who informed us that in due course there was no doubt Shirburn's property would be recovered and restored.

The strangest part of the story is, however, yet to come. I told our adventures to my poor old organist friend the next day, and he was naturally surprised and delighted. "And so," said I, "James Shirburn is now a rich, and what is more, a sane man."

"James Shirburn! James Shirburn! Why that's my brother-in-law; that's the man who married my sister long after I ran away from home! I never saw him, but that's his name."

I was naturally extremely astonished, and for the time I really thought the old man bereft of his senses. At last I gasped out—"What is your real name, Mr. Greenwood?"

"Everton, sir," he said; "I see it all now, and why he was so affected by my playing 'Angels ever bright and fair'—why, it were my pretty sister's favourite air; she was always of a singing of it!"

Mr. Everton now plays the organ in the church of his native village, and if the pedals get "broke" they are soon repaired by his friend and benefactor, Mr. Shirburn.

Thus became I—unwittingly—a mediator.

A MAN entirely satisfied with himself has no time to be satisfied with other people.

LIFE is short, art long; opportunity fleeting, experiment slippery, judgment difficult.

BEETHOVEN AND THE PAINTER DANHAUSER.

The genial painter of *tableaux de genre*, who died in the bloom of life, 1845, at Vienna, had a profound admiration for the genius of Beethoven, and the latter, pleased with the unsophisticated manners and engaging demeanour of the gifted youth, allowed him free access to his residence.

Danhauser, seizing a favourable opportunity, expressed his desire to hand down to posterity a model of the great poet of sounds. Beethoven, who considered portrait-painting and sculpture as one and the same thing, tried hard to excuse himself, and confessed that he had no ambition to see himself portrayed, and that he cherished ease and comfort too much to sit to any artist. Danhauser persisted, and persuading Beethoven that he ought to leave a faithful representation of himself to posterity, the latter at last gave way, and a day was fixed for his visit to the painter's studio.

We should add, that besides painting in oils, Danhauser devoted much of his time to modelling. Should the reader be unacquainted with the process of modelling from nature, I will briefly mention that the face of the model is covered over with a tepid liquid mass of clay or plaster, which in cooling becomes hard and forms a solid crust, and when taken off presents a correct impression of the face, and from which a cast is subsequently taken. It is easily understood that this operation is one of extreme discomfort to the sitter, the face being entirely walled in; sufficient air for breathing can only be admitted through a quill or tube inserted in the mouth, and the plaster in drying produces a disagreeable sensation to the skin. Removing the clay from the face is also a matter of difficulty, and accompanied by some pain to the sitter, as each individual hair adheres to the mould, and is extracted perforce with it on its removal. All this the artist had not communicated to Beethoven, fearing that such explanations might defer the execution of his project. The unsuspecting model, therefore, had not the least idea of what he had to encounter.

After anxiously awaiting Beethoven's arrival at the hour appointed, the musician at last entered the studio, and preparations were commenced. Beethoven was first bidden to remove his neck-cloth and coat, and then take a seat. "You will not decapitate me?" said he, much astonished at all the proceedings. Danhauser tried to pacify the composer, and promised to shorten the uncomfortable operation as much as lay in his power. To the great amazement of Beethoven he now began to cover his eyebrows with thin slips of paper, and the hairy part of his face with an oily liquid; finally, to smother the whole with plaster of Paris, having first begged him to take a quill in

his mouth, and to shut his eyes firmly. Beethoven appeared dismayed; but when the coat of plaster gradually began to thicken, and the glow of the drying matter began disagreeably to affect his face and forehead, he became horrified and enraged, and suddenly jumping up, with hair standing on end, he tried to disengage himself from the plaster, and exclaimed, "Sir, you are a garotter—a bandit—a monster!"

"For Heaven's sake, my most honoured Kapellmeister," stuttered the confounded artist. But Beethoven interrupted him violently—"A rogue—a cannibal!" "But, permit that I ——" "Away!" roared Beethoven, smashing to atoms the chair upon which he had been sitting. He snatched his hat and coat and rushed out of the room, forgetting to put either of these garments on. Danhauser hastened after the raving man, and tried to pacify him; but Beethoven, extricating himself from his grasp, exclaimed, "Go back, you cunning assassin! Do not attempt to approach me, or I'll throttle you." After these words he ran out of Danhauser's house, slamming the door behind him, his face still covered with plaster, and deadly pale, like the ghost in "Don Juan," spluttering and bubbling, leaving the poor artist frustrated in his most beautiful intentions. Down all the staircases he continued to hear the curses and imprecations of the flying man. All intercourse between Beethoven and Danhauser ceased from that moment, though they occasionally met. Yet, each time he caught sight of Danhauser the old rage returned, and when perceiving him occasionally at a distance he took care that the length of a street should divide them.

It was destined, however, that Danhauser should triumph, and crown his most ardent wishes; for, after a certain lapse of time, he succeeded in obtaining a faithful impression of Beethoven's face. The painful proceeding this time did not transform the old Titan of music into an exasperated madman—his face smiling peacefully all the while the artist manipulated at his ease. The triumph, however, was a sad one, for the spirit of harmony had passed away. A little appendix might be added to the comic-tragic event just related, which occurred at the time of the modelling.

Danhauser having obtained from the Hofrath von Breuning and Kapellmeister Schindler, friends of Beethoven, the permission to model the deceased, went with his colleague to the house of the defunct of the Glacis. After having made a portrait in pencil, Danhauser began the necessary preparations for moulding. An unforeseen obstacle presented itself. The beard of the deceased, which had not been touched during all the period of his illness, had to be removed. Danhauser

sent for a barber, who, of course, was willing to take the impending element away from chin and cheek, but demanded a ducat for his services. A ducat was more than the young artists possessed between them at the time; they, therefore, had to send this unwilling Figaro away and undertake the operation themselves.

Rauft hastened to fetch his razor, and to sharpen the blade for the occasion. Danhauser applied the

soap, and Rauft cut the bristly beard, after which Danhauser began his work. The sculptor Dietrich finished the bust of Beethoven from the mask taken by Danhauser, the only faithful portrait in existence. Unfortunately the mould broke at the thirteenth cast. It is said that the original mask of the deceased remains till this day in the possession of the painters Cramolini in Vienna.—*From "Musical Sketches," by Professor Ella.*

— * * * * —

TAUSIG AND RUBINSTEIN.

BERLIN.

February 8th, 1870.

I have heard both Rubinstein and Tausig in concert since I last wrote. They are both wonderful, but in quite a different way. Rubinstein has the greatest power and *abandon* in playing that you can imagine, and is extremely exciting. I never saw a man to whom it seemed so easy to play. It is as if he were just sporting with the piano, and could do what he pleased with it. Tausig, on the contrary, is extremely restrained, and has not quite enthusiasm enough, but he is absolutely *perfect*, and plays with the greatest expression. He is pre-eminent in grace and delicacy of execution, but seems to hold back his power in a concert room, which is very singular, for when he plays to his classes in the Conservatory he seems all passion. His conception is so very refined that sometimes it is a little too much so, while Rubinstein is occasionally too precipitate. I have not yet decided which I like best, but in my estimation Clara Schumann, as a whole, is superior to either, although she has not their unlimited technique.

This was Tausig's programme:—

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|-----|--------------|
| 1.—Sonata, Op. 53 | ... | ... | Beethoven. |
| 2.—(a) Bourrée | ... | ... | Bach. |
| (b) Presto Scherzando | ... | ... | Mendelssohn. |
| (c) Barcarole, Op. 60 | ... | ... | |
| (d) Ballade, Op. 47 | ... | ... | Chopin. |
| (e) Zwei Mazurkas, Op. 59 & 33 | ... | ... | |
| (f) Aufforderung zum Tang | ... | ... | Weber. |
| 3.—Kreisleriana, Op. 16 | ... | ... | Schumann. |
| Phantasie Stücke | ... | ... | |
| 4.—Ständchen von Shakespeare nach | ... | ... | Liszt. |
| Schubert | ... | ... | |
| Ungarische Rhapsodie | ... | ... | |

Tausig's octave-playing is the most extraordinary I ever heard. The last great effect in his programme was in the Rhapsody by Liszt in an octave variation. He first played it so *pianissimo* that you could just hear it, and then he repeated the variation and gave it tremendously *forte*. It was colossal! His scales surpassed Clara Schumann's, and it seems as if he played with velvet fingers, his touch is so very soft. He played

the great C major Sonata by Beethoven—Moscheles' favourite, you know. His conception of it was not brilliant, as I expected it would be, but very calm and dreamy, and the first movement especially he took very *piano*. He did it most beautifully, but I was not quite satisfied with the last movement, for I expected he would make a grand climax with those passionate trills, and he did not. Chopin he plays divinely, and that little Bourrée of Bach's that I used to play was magical. He played it like lightning, and made it perfectly bewitching.

Altogether, he is a great man. But Clara Schumann always puts herself *en rapport* with you immediately; Tausig and Rubinstein do not sway you as she does, and, therefore, I think she is the greater interpreter, although I imagine the Germans would not agree with me. Tausig has such a little hand that I wonder he has been able to acquire his immense virtuosity. He is only thirty years old, and is much younger than Rubinstein and Bülow.

The day after Tausig's concert I went as usual to hear him give the lesson to his best class of girls. I got there a little before the hour, and the girls were in the dressing-room waiting for the young men to be through with their lesson. They were talking about the concert. "Was it not beautiful?" said little Timanoff to me; "I did not sleep the whole night after it!"—a touch of sentiment that quite surprised me in that small personage, and made me feel some compunctions as I had slept soundly myself. "I have practised five hours to-day already," she added. Just then the young men came out of the class-room and we passed into it. Tausig was standing by the piano. "Begin!" said he to Timanoff, more shortly even than usual; "I trust you have brought me a study this time." He always insists upon a study in addition to the piece. Timanoff replied in the affirmative, and proceeded to open Chopin's "Etudes." She played the great A minor "Winter Wind" study, and most magnificently too, starting off with the greatest brilliancy and "go." I was perfectly amazed at such a feat from such a child,

and expected that Tausig would exclaim with admiration. Not so that Rhadamanthus. He heard it through without comment or correction, and when Timanoff had finished, simply remarked very composedly, "So! Have you taken the *next Etude* also?" as if the great A minor were not enough for one meal! It is eight pages long to begin with, and there is no let-up to the difficulty all the way through. Afterwards, however, he told the young men that "he could not have done it better" himself.

Tausig is so hasty and impatient that to be in his classes must be a fearful ordeal. He will not bear the slightest fault. The last time I went into his class to hear him teach he was dreadful. Fräulein H. began, and she has remarkable talent, and is far beyond me. She would not play *piano* enough to suit him, and finally he stamped his foot at her, snatched her hand from the piano, and said: "Will you play *piano* or not? for if not we will go no farther!"

The second girl sat down and played a few lines. He made her begin over again several times, and finally came up and took her music away, and slapped it down on the piano—"You have been studying it for weeks, and you can't play a note of it; practise it for a month and then you can bring it to me again," he said.

The third was Fräulein Timanoff, who is a little genius, I think. She brought a Sonata by Schubert—the lovely one in A-minor—and by the way he behaved, Tausig must have a special feeling about that particular sonata. Timanoff began running it off in her usual nimble style, having evidently practised it every minute of the time when she was not asleep since her last lesson. She had not proceeded far down the first page when he stopped her and began to fuss over the expression. She began again, but this time with no better luck. A third time, but still he was dissatisfied, though he suffered her to go on a little farther. He kept stopping her every moment in the most tantalizing and exasperating manner. If it had been I, I should have cried, but Timanoff is well broken, and only flushed deeply to the very tips of her small ears. From an apple-blossom she changed to a carnation. Tausig grew more and more savage, and made her skip whole pages in his impatience. "Play here!" he would say, in the most impatient tone, pointing to a half or whole page farther on. "This I cannot bear!—Go on farther!—It is too bad to be listened to!" Finally he struck the music with the back of his hand, and exclaimed, in a despairing way, "*Kind, es liegt eine Seele darin. Weiss du nicht es liegt eine Seele darin?*" (Child, there's a soul in the piece. Don't you know there is a *soul* in it?) To the little Timanoff, who has no soul, and who is not

sufficiently experienced to counterfeit one, this speech evidently conveyed no particular idea. She ran on as glibly as ever till Tausig could endure no more, and shut up the music. I was much disappointed, as it was new to me, and I like to hear Timanoff's little fingers tinkle over the keys, *Seele* or no *Seele*. She has a most accurate and dainty way of doing everything, and, somehow, in her healthy little brain I hardly wish for *Seele*!

Last of all Fräulein L. played, and she alone suited him. She is a Swede, and the best scholar he has, but she has such frightfully ugly hands, and holds them so terribly, that when I look at her I cannot enjoy her playing. Tausig always praises her very much, and she is tremendously ambitious.

Tausig has a charming face, full of expression and very sensitive. He is extremely sharp-sighted, and has eyes in the back of his head, I believe. He is far too small and too despotic to be fascinating, however, though he has a sort of captivating way with him when he is in a good humour.

I was dreadfully sorry to hear of poor Gottschalk's death. He had a golden touch, and equal to any in the world, I think. But what a romantic way to die!—to fall senseless at his instrument while he was playing "*La Morte*." It was very strange. If anything more is in the papers about him you must send it to me, for the infatuation that I and 99,999 other American girls once felt for him still lingers in my breast!

On Saturday night I went for the first time to hear the Berlin Symphony Kapelle. It is composed only of artists, and is the most splendid music imaginable. De Ahna, for instance, is one of the violinists, and he is not far behind Joachim. We have no conception of such an orchestra in America.* The Philharmonic of New York approaches it, but it is still a long way off. This orchestra is so perfect, and plays with such precision, that you can't realise that there are any performers at all. It is just a great wave of sound that rolls over you as smooth as glass. As the concert halls are much smaller here, the music is much louder, and every man not only plays *piano* and *forte* where it is marked, but he draws the *tone* out of his violin. They have the greatest pathos, consequently, in the soft parts, and overwhelming power in the loud. Where great expression is required the conductor almost ceases to beat time, and it seems as if the performers took it *ad libitum*, but they understand each other so well that they play like one man. It is *too* ecstatic. I observed the greatest difference in the horn playing. Instead of coming in in a momentous sort of way, as it does at home, and always with the same degree of loudness, here, when it is solo, it begins round and smooth and full, and then gently

* This was written before the full development of the Theodore Thomas Orchestra.

modulates until the tone seems to sigh itself out, dying away at last with a little tremolo that is perfectly melting. I never before heard such an effect. When the trumpets come in it is like the crack of doom, and you should hear the way they play the drums. I never was satisfied with the way they strike the drums in New York and Boston, for it always seemed as if they thought the parchment would break. Here, sometimes they

give such a sharp stroke that it startles me, though, of course, it is not often. But it adds immensely to the accent, and makes your heart beat, I can tell you. They played Schubert's great Symphony, and Beethoven's in B flat, and I could scarcely believe my ears at the difference between this orchestra and ours. It is as great as between — and Tausig.—From "Music Study in Germany," by Amy Fay.

HOW TO SING WELL.

In singing, the general effect is considerably lessened when the words are not clearly given. It is the wedding of these to melody which makes vocal music so much more generally appreciated than instrumental.

If one word only is indistinctly pronounced, a whole phrase may become unintelligible. And how humiliating it must be to hear one's efforts followed, as is not infrequently the case, by such remarks as "Very pretty, but what is it about?" One is often surprised at the faulty enunciation of girls considered to be well educated. It may pass unobserved in conversation, but in singing the defect at once becomes apparent. Such renderings as *caret-er-ing*, *I-er-land*, and *fi-er* are frequently the not exactly pleasing result. Many instances of this sort might be cited, but these will be sufficient.

No sound can be sustained on a consonant. All final letters must be clearly sounded, and the vocalist should be particular in finishing thoroughly such words as *love* and *rove*. Some singers get in the habit of ringing every *r* extremely, and hissing the *s*. The latter is particularly objectionable.

It would seem almost superfluous to mention, were there not so many proofs to the contrary, that *she* must be pronounced as *thee* before words beginning with a vowel, although before a consonant the *e* is short.

The portamento (slurring one note into another) must be sparingly used; it is effective only when given in suitable places. Many persons in singing hymns continue slurring throughout a whole tune, to the annoyance of those who are near.

When studying the intervals, seconds, thirds, etc., the student should practise sometimes without the piano, calculating in the mind before

singing the distance from one tone to the other, and afterwards he should strike the note last sung to find whether it was thoroughly in tune.

Joining a choral society is a capital way of becoming an adept in sight-reading, but it is not to be advised until the voice has been trained for some time, and not then if the throat is easily tired, as the vocal ligaments would be strained, and not improbably some bad habits formed.

Let me caution the student when going to sing to be careful not to talk in the open air beforehand if the weather is cold or damp, nor when travelling in cabs or omnibuses, nor in fact at any time when there is much noise going on.

When practising sustained notes, he should neither increase nor diminish the sound, but keep a full, even tone without any forcing. The swell or "messia di voce" (indicated thus : <>) should not be tried until the voice is fully under control; some months must first be given to preparatory exercises, as by attempting it too soon the vocal organs may suffer; it is a finishing study, not an elementary one. Another point is to avoid taking breath too often, or where it will interrupt the flow of a sentence, and never to try to produce a tone when the breath is already exhausted.

The singer should always endeavour to throw himself into the sentiment of the words, letting his face as well as his voice express the different shades of meaning intended. It is as absurd to look severe over a lively song as to smile when the story is pathetic.

Lastly, let him remember that a sweet voice, even though a small one, with perfect pronunciation, will give more pleasure than a powerful one when the words are indistinctly given.—*Cassell's Saturday Journal*.

AMUSEMENT AND LABOUR.—The enjoyment of amusement is dependent upon the habit of labour. Only through it can we earn any real right to recreation, or indeed secure the possibility of

enjoying it. If any one is truly miserable, it is he who has nothing to do, who has no "must" in his life, and who is ever on the search for pleasure.

Our next number will contain a Portrait and Biography of Miss Anna Williams, and others, Result of Prize Competitions No. 23, as well as the usual bright and interesting reading matter.



A MUSICAL MAGAZINE FOR EVERYBODY.

VOL. III. MARCH, 1896. NO. 30.

All Local Notes, Advertisements, &c., to be sent to the Local Publishers.

All other Communications should be addressed to—

The Editors, "The Minim,"
84 Newgate Street,
London, E.C.

Contents.

	PAGE
Portrait—Miss Esther Palliser	81
Biography	82
A Mediator	82
Beethoven and the Painter Danhauser	85
Tauzig and Rubinstein	86
How to Sing Well	88
Editorial	89
Miss Mabel Chaplin—Portrait and Biography	90
List on Criticism	91
The Lost Stradarius	92
How Mr. Beerbohm Tree was "Interviewed"	93
Result of Prize Competition, No. 22	94
Actors' Faces	94
From the Editor's Note-Book	95
Certain High-Priced Fiddles	95
The Career of a Great Singer	96
Three Musicians	96

ONE of the most difficult, thankless and unappreciated parts of a professional music-teacher's life is the duty of selecting appropriate music for the student to perform. It sounds so easy to say "Now get Mozart's Fantasia in C minor, or Moszkowski's Waltz in E flat," that many pupils never realise how important this choice is to their progress. Sometimes they will say, "Oh! can't I have this or that or the other instead?" regardless of the fact that the piece they desire may be totally unsuited to their special capacities. The competence or incompetence of a teacher is never more clearly demonstrated to a good musician than by his choice of music for his pupils, and it is, therefore, sometimes unjust, unkind and injurious to his reputation for pupils to attempt pieces not learnt under the master's direction. It may seem hard to make it an universal rule, but it would be really very much better for the pupil, the master and music alike if no pieces were played by students in either public or private performances (as distinct from *practisings*) which had not been taught and passed for performances by the teacher. An incredible amount of damage to good and painstaking teachers is often occasioned by thoughtlessness in this respect.



GENIUS AND FORTUNE.—It is often found that a long course of success gives a sort of confidence very different from that which arises in a reliance on accurate and extensive views and prudent calculations. Many a man sets out in life with a daring and powerful genius, which, trusting implicitly to the precautions which it has previously taken and the resources which it feels within itself for the future, grapples with enterprise and risks consequences, and succeeds in efforts that would daunt the timid, and be lost by the slow and calculating; but, after a long course of success, the basis of confidence becomes changed to the same man—he trusts to his fortune, not to his genius—grows rash instead of bold—and falls by events for which he is neither prepared nor adequate.

IN praising, be discreet; in saluting, courteous; and in admonishing, brotherly, not hastily or angrily.

THE FAILURES IN LIFE.—Half the failures in life are brought about by leaving unfinished tasks that are begun. It never is profitable to dissipate one's energy by dropping one task, well begun, to commence a new one. Such a habit has a bad effect upon the intellect and the general morals of the individual. An excellent habit to form is that which will enable one to complete the work in hand before anything else is undertaken. This habit of regularity will cultivate a strength of character which will stand in every trial of life. The mother should never lose sight of this great principle in the training of her children.

MISS MABEL CHAPLIN.



This clever young artiste commenced the study of the 'cello with Mr. J. Boatwright, and having gained a scholarship at the London Academy she entered that institution and became a pupil of Signor Pezze.

At the end of two years she left England, and went to Brussels to study in the Conservatoire under M. Jacobs, taking her first prize with distinction in 1893. This is the first time such an honour has been gained by an English girl, and both her professor and the Press predict a great future for her.

She gave her first concert, in Queen's Hall, last March, which was a great success.

————— * * * —————

THERE may be ground for the reproach that we are not a musical nation. Our musical composers make no headway on the Continent; nor is English painting or sculpture much appreciated there. It is true there is a good deal of pretended love of art in this country, but, to be quite frank, the genius of our nation is not artistic, and perhaps it is better so, if we want to maintain our supremacy in the world; for there is a strong presumption that artistic genius means national effeminacy, or unfitness for the rude battle of life. There is never much pluck in your true artist, or your true poet either.—*J. F. Nisbet.*

————— * * * * —————

GOOD manners are one of the few commodities which are not made in Germany.—*Truth.*

We have not the skill or the pretension to judge of Wagner's much-vexed music; but we doubt if since the days of Shakespeare any man has ever lived better qualified than he to take up the part of a poet-dramatist. His ways of dealing with his myths are like Shakespeare's methods with the old Italian fables, and his men and women are the true heroes and heroines of the romantic drama. We

do not know that any man before him, certainly none of distinction, wrote the words for his own music—assuredly the secret of an ideal opera if one is to be produced. His Italian disciple, Boito, has alone emulated him in that way in his wonderful "Mefistofele." But one has only to read Wagner's text to see how dramatically and humanly his characters stand out, in the weirdness of Vanderdecken, in the humours of the Master-Singer, or in the rich Arthurian romance of Elsa and Lohengrin, of Tannhäuser and Elizabeth.—*Spectator.*

LISZT ON CRITICISM.

(Translated from the German by W. Ashton Ellis.)

Well do we know the scruples by which many artists allow themselves to be held back from journalistic intervention in matters concerning their own interests—scruples which in our eyes are more honourable than keen-wittedness, and for which one well might envy those who suffer by them. They know too well what labour it involves to learn to wield the paint-brush, chisel and score. With praiseworthy modesty they hesitate to wield in literary mode the pen, an instrument whose handling they have neither learnt nor practised. With an explicable—but, under existing conditions, exaggerated—regard for Literature, they have lived too long in the belief that only artistic mastery of prose or poetry could justify participation in the discourse of the Press, to be able at once to rid them of this prejudice. In order to figure in type the best and most intelligent among them—and just those who in this their province should have been the ones to lift their voices—have fancied that it was not enough to have learnt, thought, and pondered much; but that one must also possess the art of expressing the result. As though the article-mongers of the papers had learnt so much, had thought and pondered o'er so much! as though they had the necessary *savoir dire!* The most candid artists might admit, as often as one wished, that they understood a hundredfold better than their critics did, what was the root of the whole matter; they ventured not forward, as if they feared to be given the lie should they depend upon themselves for the needful literary aptitude.

In view of the position which the Press has taken in our present social economy, such an abstention must be declared a distinct mistake. For nowadays it is not so ominous a step to take, to set foot within its columns. Erstwhile the book was a tribune, the pamphlet a stage, men placed themselves *en scène* when they addressed the public. In the nineteenth century, however, the word "authorship" has lost much of its importance.

"*Le journal a tué la conversation,*" they say in France, where piquant interchange of thoughts had become an absolute art, a power so great that its effects had taken on the aspect of a political motor. However, killed it is not! But since the majority of cultured people of every rank and every nation have given themselves a common place of meeting in the Press, it is transformed.

As conversation once collected men around the friendly fireside with its ornaments of porcelain from Japan, round the table of a coffee-room, or on the benches of a tavern; so it does now in the newspaper; every one according to his respective

gifts—true or false, far-seeing or short-sighted, poetical or sophistic. The journal has become a speaking-tube, through whose instrumentation they set aside the bounds of space and time, and parley with unknown sharers of their views. Here no one is exclusively confined to the surrounding which fate or chance has meted to him. Like interests and convictions reach their hands to one another from afar, and sympathetic tendencies from all quarters meet in brotherhood. The audience of a learned entertainment is no longer limited by the size of its *locale*, but this stretches out across all lands and latitudes.

If, therefore, the Press be nothing but a new form of conversation, a new method of uttering thoughts, just as the daily rounds of affairs and of the world's events awake them in us, and as it mirrors itself in our minds and in our intuition (*anschaung*), why then should a distinguished artist—whereby we signify an "enlightened mind"—lack the faculty of formulating his intuitive (*anschauich*) ideas and opinions, his feelings and impressions, and of thus contributing his quota to the larger conversation of the Press? Even though he confine himself to certain specialities, yet will he ever know of something instructive to say about them. He who but understands his handicraft aright, will, even without any remarkable art of language, be able to express himself better thereon than the ignoramuses who flood the printing-house with their art prattle because the artists themselves offer nothing concerning their own affairs.

When public opinion on Art was still clothed in naught but spoken words, and criticism remained unprinted, artists deprived themselves as little as they do now of the satisfaction of giving utterance to their ideas in the most piquant of allusions and the most apposite of forms in the course of conversation, why then should they now keep silence when their words, instead of re-echoing from a hundred lips, will be read by a thousand eyes? Even though they should prove at first a little awkward, what would that matter? The awkwardness would soon wear off, and with a little practice, they would turn out as good magazine articles as their correspondence shows them treating noteworthy facts or suggestive thoughts in the most genial and graceful style, as for example is evidenced by the collections of letters of the Italian painters. How little labour would it cost to gather together, in one *résumé* of clear and elegantly expressed opinions the essence of these communications of many artists, confided in mutual counsel?

Ce qui se conçoit bien, s'énonce clairement—
Et les mots pour le dire arrivent aisément.

On the other hand, it is here no question of "playing the author," but of bringing sound views into circulation, of giving due force to the opinion of competent men. The question of form must yield first place to that of inner content. However much accomplishment of style may be a merit, a charm, or even an additional means to success, yet it is not indispensable provided the matter of discourse be accurate and correct. For, in the first place, nature always cares for what is requisite; and where she bestows intelligence she adds the needful logic for its clear expression; and beyond this the fund of wit or ornament which is desirable for the embellishment of truth and accuracy may well be won by diligence and individual attentiveness. We have not to strive for

glutting of our vanity, nor for literary perfection, but to set ourselves in line and column for the defence of our own fields and pastures, so that at the least we may be reckoned with and considered when the life or death of our spiritual existence is set upon the cast.

Criticism must be more and more the business of the *productive artists* themselves. This is an absolute necessity for the sake of Art. Nor is it merely in the interest of a dubious majority that we call, but of a minority which is numerous enough to give the tone, and which longs to direct its sincere endeavours to the culture and education of the public taste, and to the conscious and uncurtailed delight in, and possession of, the beautiful.

— * * * * —

THE LOST STRADUARIUS.

"I wants to make your flesh creep," said the Fat Boy to old Mrs. Wardle. This is the evident intention of the author of "The Lost Straduarius" as regards the reader, and it must be admitted that he has succeeded. It is not the least like an ordinary ghost story, but it is a very ghostly one, though one can just fancy a despiser of music calling it "all fiddle." Indeed, it takes a considerable amount of culture, and some acquaintance with the occult, and, above all, "an ear," to be moved by it as one ought to be. Still, it is a powerful tale. Two undergraduates of Cambridge, "sons of harmony" of a very different kind from Dick Swiveller's friends, are playing, one the piano and the other the violin, in the rooms of one of them at Magdalene Hall. They are executing a piece found in an old manuscript music-book a hundred years old, the "Gagliarda;" by Graziani.

As they do so, one of those low basket-chairs dear to collegians performs an entirely unconcerted and disconcerting accompaniment.

"The sound was a perfectly familiar one, as of some person placing a hand on either arm of the chair preparatory to conveying himself into it, followed by another as of the same person being leisurely seated."

When the "Gagliarda" was finished the creaking began again; sounds such as would be made by a person raising himself from a sitting posture. The young men are not so much alarmed as some people—myself, for example—would have been. They discarded the notion—which only persons of their intelligence would have entertained—that there must be in the wicker chair "osiers responsive to certain notes of the violin."

They at once entertained the idea, so flattering to their musical abilities, that there might really "come night after night some strange visitant" (why,

by-the-bye, is a supernatural dropper-in always called that, and not a visitor?) "to hear them, some poor creature whose heart was bound up in that tune." Would it not be unkind to send him away without again and again having the opportunity of hearing his favourite piece so exceptionally well played?

The pluck of the two young men no doubt increases our respect for their unseen audience, the effect of whose presence becomes in the end so destructive to one of them.

He alone was privileged to see the visitant—

"The figure was that of a man perhaps thirty-five years of age and still youthful appearance. The face was long and oval, the hair brown and brushed straight off an exceptionally high forehead. His complexion was very pale, indeed bloodless. He was clean shaven, and his finely-cut mouth, with compressed lips, wore something of a sneering smile. His general expression was unpleasing, and from the first my brother felt as by intuition that there was present some malign and wicked influence. His eyes were not visible, as he kept them cast down, resting his head on his hand in the attitude of one listening."

Most people under such circumstances would have thought with a well-known philosopher that there was nothing less desirable than "a little music" in the world; but the intrepid violinist continued the "Gagliarda" to the end—

"Then the visitant got up, putting his hands on the arms of the chair to raise himself, and causing the creaking so often heard before. The hands forced themselves on my brother's notice: they were very white, with the long, delicate fingers of a musician. He showed a considerable height; and, still keeping his eyes on the floor, walked with an ordinary gait towards the end of the bookcase at the

side of the room farthest from the window. He reached the bookcase, and was then suddenly lost sight of. The figure did not fade gradually, but went out, as it were, like the flame of a suddenly extinguished candle."

In a cupboard in this bookcase our hero afterwards discovered the Straduarius. It had lain there for more than a century, and whether such a treasure-trove belonged to the college or the Crown it did not, it is plain, belong to the discoverer. Nevertheless, he stuck to it.

This is the one blot in the character of our violinist. If he had been a collector of course one would not have expected him to resist such a

temptation; but that a mere love of music should cause a young gentleman to commit such a crime gives rise to reflection.

One deduction may well be drawn from it, and laid to heart both by professionals and amateurs—that if you steal a fiddle it is the rightful owner that calls the tune.

Our musical friend plays little else than the "Gagliarda" from the day of his misdemeanour, and with the saddest consequences. They are narrated with much literary skill, and in a vein that has not been worked so well since "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" thrilled us all so delightfully.—*James Payn* in the "Illustrated London News."

HOW MR. BEERBOHM TREE WAS "INTERVIEWED."

"Your husband, Mrs. Tree!" I caught at the allusion. "I can see him, can't I, to ask him a few questions about his plans and about Svengali, and things in general, too?"

"He is fearfully busy," said Mrs. Tree, "but I am *sure* he is anxious to tell you things. He is downstairs with his secretary, Mr Luther Munday. I don't *think* he's gone out yet. Let us go down and beard the lion in his den."

And in a bright orange-coloured den we found Mr. Tree. The creaking of quills, the discreet secretary, and, most of all, the wildly upstanding hair on Mr. Tree's head, betokened a busy morning indeed. My courage began to decline.

"Herbert!" said Mrs. Tree softly.

"Darling! One, one moment!" was the fevered answer, as the quill went running on. In a little while he murmured to his secretary, "'Yours faithfully' or 'Yours sincerely'—which d'you think?"

"'Yours sincerely,' perhaps, will do, Mr. Tree."

"I hate the man—he beats his wife," said Mr. Tree. "I'll put '*very* sincerely'; he'll know I don't mean that, so there's no violation to my conscience."

Another scratch or two of the quill and then, with a deep sigh of relief, Mr. Tree wheeled round and looked rather startled at seeing me there with Mrs. Tree.

"Of course—yes," he said, as I was being introduced. "Delighted to see you. I remember—but have you ever acted before? . . . I beg your pardon. A gentleman who was anxious to be an actor was coming to see me to-day . . . 'The English Illustrated.'"

The manager rose to his full height, brushed back his hair with one hand, and fixed me with his blue eyes. "A charming magazine! Well, as to the modern drama —" Pausing, he glanced at his watch, and gave a short whistle, "I have some

letters I must get done for the post. Could my wife show you things in the meantime? I'll come up to you in five minutes. So sorry to have to keep you waiting. *Au revoir!* There are some cigarettes upstairs."

A big black poodle followed us out of the room, under the impression, as Mrs. Tree explained, that we were going to take him out for a walk. "Poor darling Bingo!" Mrs. Tree said, running her hand through the dog's luxuriant ringlets, as we went upstairs once more, "I would put him through *all* his tricks for you, only the poor hound has no tricks; but he loves me very dearly. Now let me 'show you things.' Now what is there?"

* * * * *

And so Mrs. Tree talked on. When I asked if it were true that a great Shakespearean production, with a great part for her, was to follow "Trilby" at some far-distant date, she said quickly that she could not tell me "anything that really matters, you know," and that it would be absurd to think of putting on another play before Doomsday.

"And that reminds me," she added; "far more than five minutes have gone by, and my husband hasn't kept his promise to you. We had better go down again, and you shall drag his secrets from him."

Mr. Tree was standing, as we made our *rentree*, dictating something to his secretary. I was not sure from his look that he remembered my face; but, as he shook my hand with great, if distant, courtesy, I murmured an apology and a hope for a few moments' talk. Mr. Tree opened his eyes very wide, and gazed at the carpet. I could not help smiling as I contrasted this erect gentleman, ruddy-faced and blonde of hair, with the sinister Svengali I had seen a few nights before.

"Well," he began, "of course the actor's art more than any other is somewhat——"

He turned round at this moment, and, noticing a little array of letters awaiting his signature, he

took up a quill and began signing them slowly, one by one.

"My hat; where is it?" he murmured. His secretary took it from an adjacent chair. "And my stick?" His fingers closed instinctively upon the knob of it as it was offered to him.

"Good-bye," he said, gripping my hand with grave cordiality. "Good-bye, darling," he said, as he kissed his wife. "I shall be in so soon." As he retreated he caught sight of the little clock upon the mantelpiece and gave a low whistle.—*A. B., in the "English Illustrated Magazine."*

RESULT OF COMPETITION.—No. 22.

The question set was to identify the phrase quoted, to give composer's name and place where first performed, and the number of times the *exact* intervals recur in chorus from which the phrase was taken.

Taken *seriatim* the facts are—

1. From 1st chorus in "*Lobgesang*" by Mendelssohn.
2. St. Thomas' Church, Leipzig.
3. Seven times, viz.:—

In Soprano	...	1	...	Bar 5
" Alto	...	2	...	" 22 and 25
" Tenor	...	3	...	" 3, 69, 73
" Bass	...	1	...	" 10

7

The winner competed under the motto "Adsum," and his name and address are—

H. G. TAYLOR,

38 Clarendon Street,

Nottingham,

to whom the prize announced has been forwarded.

Several competitors gave the correct answers "Spero Meliora" puts down the exact figures, but adds them up as eight times; two other competitors boldly announce eight; whilst one enterprising "Chromatic Semitone" has actually discovered eleven occurrences of the *exact* intervals! Truly we are a musical nation.

ACTORS' FACES.

Actors and actresses' faces are of great interest to the physiognomist. An actors' art must of necessity involve the stimulation of both the muscular and trophic factors of expression. Not only has he to emphasise the facial movements which are appropriate to his part, in order that his expression may be plainly seen by the pit and gallery, but he is, as a rule, obliged to change his rôle frequently, and to assume a succession of characters requiring very different facial renderings. As a result, all his expression muscles are exercised as thoroughly as are the body muscles of an athlete who is undergoing a systematic course in a gymnasium. Hence, in a typical actor's face, when seen at rest, no one group of expression muscles out-pulls the others, and as a consequence of this state of muscular balance there is about it a peculiar aspect suggestive of a mask. Moreover, this impulsive and almost wooden look is enhanced in many cases by an even layer of subcutaneous fat—the result, probably, of emotional stimulation of a constantly varying character.

I am aware that many actors state that they do not consciously experience the emotions which they simulate, but from the fact that they are able, without taking thought, to adapt their voices, gestures and expressions to the sentiments they utter, it is

clear that the organic (sympathetic) nerves are moved if the conscious ego is not, and this is all that is required to influence trophic function, whether in the face or elsewhere. Miss Ada Rehan, who was kind enough to assist me in clearing up this point, stated that, in rendering any particular expression, she is quite unconscious of any deliberate effort of the will.

One consequence of the full exercise of all the facial muscles, and of the trophic results of varying emotions, is a remarkable interference with the time records which are usually so visible on the human face. In fact, most actors maintain a somewhat boyish aspect until late in life, although the suggestion of callow immaturity is at times rather startlingly contradicted by the expression of the eye. In ladies who adopt the stage as a profession a true youthful appearance is, as a rule, much better maintained.

Until the physiological principles which account for the phenomenon are understood it must remain a very puzzling fact that an actress's life should be more favourable to the preservation of good looks, and even of girlish freshness, than the life led by women who occupy their natural sphere, and who cultivate (as they think) all physical and moral virtues.—*Popular Science Monthly.*

FROM THE EDITOR'S NOTE-BOOK.

Mr. Robert Newman had a pleasant surprise one Sunday lately when Mr. Frye Parker, the leader of the orchestra, presented him—on behalf of the Sunday orchestra—with a handsome testimonial to the energy and ability with which he had conducted the Sunday Afternoon Concerts, which are a boon to many.

The courteous and enterprising manager of the Queen's Hall tells me that the famous orchestra conducted by M. Lamoureux, of Paris, will give three concerts there on the 13th, 16th and 18th of April next, when all those who stick up for England in all things will have an opportunity of comparing English crack orchestras with a French one.

Candidly, I don't think the Queen's Hall Choir added to their reputation by the Ash Wednesday performance of Rossini's "Stabat Mater." The "Hymn of Praise" which preceded it was a highly meritorious production; but the unaccompanied solo and chorus, "Eia Mater" was only saved from

collapse by the timely efforts of Mr. H. J. Wood at the organ. I have heard better renderings of this particular item in small country towns, so far as intonation and attack were concerned. But Watkin Mills was *splendid*; his rich, full voice has a peculiar *timbre* all its own especially charming.

I must apologise to Mr. W. H. Cummings for a little slip that crept into the short notice of his life which appeared in last month's issue. The paragraph should, of course, have read:—"One of the reasons for Mr. Cummings' success lies in the fact that he has always been known, not only as a tenor vocalist of high distinction, but as a widely cultivated musician generally." The writer's meaning was, however, apparent enough, for several readers have written us suggesting the passage to be as it appeared in our contributor's manuscript; whilst, as the printer's error was not discovered by quite four proof-readers, it was evident that the context gave the impression intended which the literal words did not imply.

————★★★★————
CERTAIN HIGH-PRICED FIDDLIES.

The beauty and sweetness of Sarasate's tone are often commented upon by people who never think of the tone being in any way due to the fineness of his instrument. As a matter of fact, Sarasate has two Strads. One is the renowned "Boissier Strad," which he managed to secure in Paris for £1,000 an hour or two before Hill, of London, sent an offer for it; the other is one that had been used by Paganini, which came to him through his son Achille. Of course, the latter instrument has an additional value from the circumstance of its former ownership.

Paganini had several valuable violins, and the instrument which he used in his later years—a Guarnerius, dated 1743—would probably command something like £5,000 if it could be put in the market now; indeed, the sum of £2,400 has already been offered for it and refused, and a report was lately circulated that £10,000 had been tried. But the instrument cannot be sold. Paganini himself bequeathed it to the city of Genoa, and the municipal authorities there are keenly alive to the value of the treasure. They have it bestowed in a glass case in a recess of a wall, which is again

encased in heavy French plate glass, the whole being closed by a massive door. Every two months the seals are broken, and the violin is played upon for about half-an-hour in the presence of city officials, and then it is replaced and put under municipal seal. This, of course, is done to keep the instrument in good condition.

Paganini came by the violin in a curious way. A French merchant lent him the instrument to play upon at a concert at Leghorn. After the concert Paganini brought it back to its owner, when the latter exclaimed, to the delighted astonishment of the player—"Never more will I profane the strings which your fingers have touched; that instrument is yours." The Genoa people have been in luck in the matter of violins.

Sivori, who died last year, was a pupil of Paganini, and Paganini presented him when a youth with a fine Guarnerius instrument. It was therefore but natural that Sivori should wish his violin to rest beside Paganini's; and so to-day, for a small fee, you can see both instruments in the municipal niche at Genoa.—*Cornhill*.

WE learn wisdom from failure much more than from success; we often discover what will do by finding out what will not do; and probably he who never made a mistake never made a discovery.

I NEVER yet found pride in a noble nature, nor humility in an unworthy mind. Nothing procureth love like humility; nothing hate like pride.
—*Owen Feltham*.

THE CAREER OF A GREAT SINGER.

Early in 1794 Mrs. Billington left England, accompanied by her husband and brother. She travelled in Germany and Italy, and at Naples she appeared, through the good offices of Sir William Hamilton, at the San Carlo, where her singing created an extraordinary impression. Here her husband died suddenly, not, as it was alleged, without suspicion of poison, and after a stay of over a year she made a sort of progress through Italy, singing at all the chief towns with unvarying success.

At Venice her recovery from a severe illness was celebrated by the opera-house being illuminated for three nights.

At Bologna Napoleon heard her, and by him she was introduced to Josephine, who was then at Milan. Here she met and married her second husband, M. (afterward Count) Felisent, a handsome young Frenchman who seems to have followed the French Army in some unexplained capacity.

Scandal, ever busy with all that concerned her, reported him to be an impostor and a rogue, and there can be no doubt that he treated her badly, probably because he was not content to occupy the insignificant position which had satisfied James Billington.

The pair were married in 1799, and at first they settled at Treviso, but two years had scarcely elapsed before Mrs. Billington returned to London, where she continued to sing until 1811. Her reappearance created a great stir in the musical world.

The managers of both Covent Garden and Drury Lane tried to engage her, and eventually it was arranged that she should appear alternately at both houses. In the course of the year 1801 she is said to have made no less than £15,000, an immense sum for a singer to earn even in these days, and one which seems almost impossible at that time.—*National Review*.

THREE MUSICIANS.

The "Strand Musical Magazine" is often full of good things, and among them are very interesting chats with popular people in the world of music. The following are brief extracts:—

MADAME ELLA RUSSELL.

Discussing oratorio, Mme. Russell remarked that she did not care so much for Handel's music as for Gounod's "Redemption" and Sullivan's "Golden Legend." "And," she added, "I am extremely fond of Mendelssohn. . . . In many of the places outside London one finds most appreciative audiences. In Dublin, for example, it is delightful to watch the 'gods.' They fully enjoy a good performance, but at the same time they won't stand anything bad from an artist. I am very fond of towns where there are students," continued Mme. Russell; "they are so fresh and sincere in their criticisms. I may tell you that when I visited Edinburgh the students took out the horses from my carriage, and dragged me in triumph to my hotel."

MISS ESTHER PALLISER.

Asked whether she preferred the platform to the stage, Miss Palliser replied, "Concert work is, of course, the easier, but I am happiest in opera; I like Marguerite, Juliet, Aida, Elsa, and all the Wagner *rôles*." Some time ago, it will be remembered, Miss Palliser gave a vocal recital, consisting entirely of the music of women composers. Speaking of this she observed that the idea struck her that by such a recital she could not only introduce the compositions of well-known composers, but also those of women who, while possessing talent, are not so prominently before the public.

M. PLANCON,

the famous opera singer, says: "Paris is my real home, because my parents live there with me, but I am attached to London, for it is, without any doubt, the musical metropolis *par excellence*. Artists feel this so much that they wait for the London verdict to seal their fate, and a reputation does not seem valid until London criticism has sanctioned it with its *probavi*."

SCHUBERT pure and simple, with the purity of genius, the simplicity of perfection, is anathema to the modern pianist, who, instead of playing the lovely music which he composed for the pianoforte, gives us the lovely music which he composed

for the voice, divorced from its proper vehicle, harnessed between shafts which ought never to have come near it, and bedizened with bizarre trappings that recall the old lady of Banbury Cross.—*World*.

